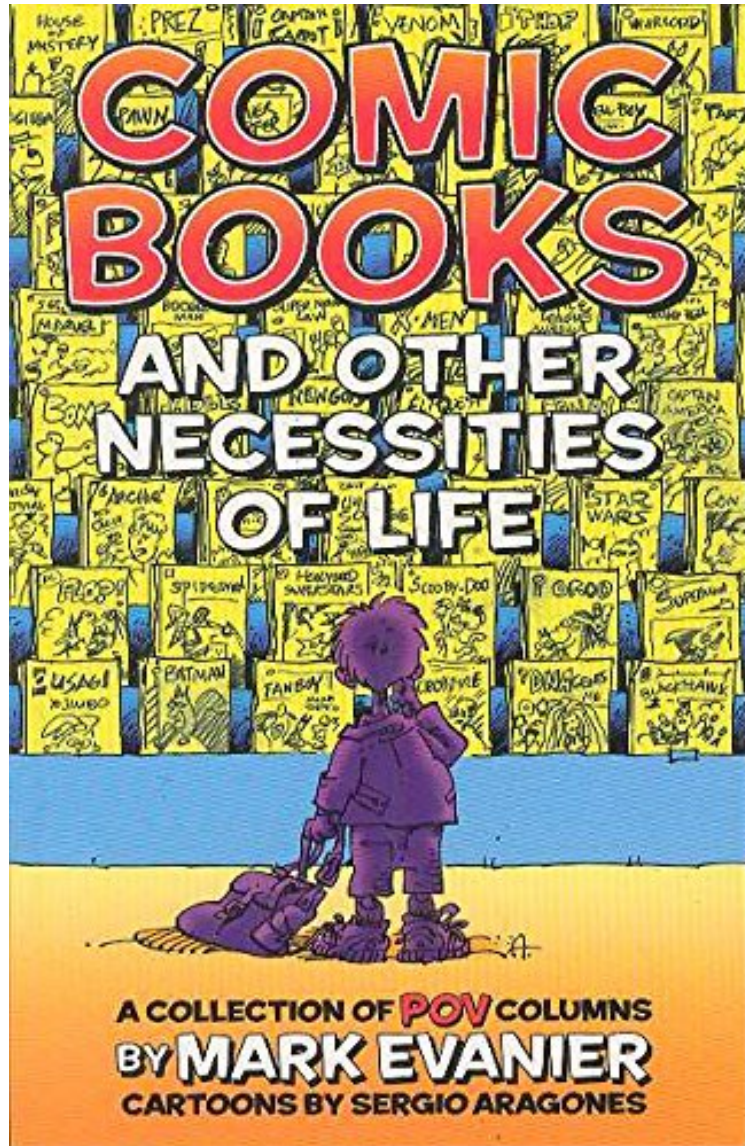


Comic Books and Other Necessities of Life

Mark Evanier

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Mark Evanier : Comic Books and Other Necessities of Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Comic Books and Other Necessities of Life:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. FunnyBy Bob OpperFunny!23 of 23 people found the following review helpful. A Comic Book Book for People Who No Longer Read ComicsBy Classic SitcomsLike a lot of guys who came of age in the 1960's, comic books were the defining literature of my childhood. (And I use the term "literature" loosely, since the titles I followed most enthusiastically as a kid were the Superman family comics edited

by Mort Weisinger, the legendarily gimmick-obsessed editor who never met a color of kryptonite he didn't like.) Printed cheaply and sold for almost nothing--12 apiece was the going rate when I started buying them, up from a dime a few years earlier--newsstand comic books of that era were the very definition of disposable pop culture. So why is it that, forty years later, I still can't shake those damned funny books out of my consciousness? At least part of the answer may be found in Mark Evanier's Comic Books and Other Necessities of Life, a collection of funny, informative and opinionated essays on the world of comics and the people who read, collect, write and/or draw them. Since Evanier is that rare person who has, at one time or another, done all of those things, the book also serves as a de facto memoir of the author's storied life as a collector, creator and curator of inexpensive four color fantasies. But, while the details of the author's own surprisingly swift ascent in the comics profession--he parlayed his chairmanship of a Los Angeles comic book fan club into a youthful career as a comic book writer quicker than you can say "Shazam!"--provide a breezy narrative flow to this series of loosely connected essays, Evanier makes it clear that his love of comics and respect for the people who make them are the book's real subjects. In a string of affectionate and knowing profiles of comic art luminaries--including Jack Kirby, William M. Gaines and Carl Barks--Evanier makes a pretty convincing argument that these flesh and blood artists, and others like them, are the real comic book heroes, not the four color figments these guys brought to life. And Evanier, in turn, brings these comics creators to life in prose that's greatly enlivened by the author's seemingly endless inventory of firsthand anecdotes. Indeed, the author seems to have known, interviewed or otherwise collaborated with practically every single person who ever set foot in a comic publisher's office or animation studio over the past three or four decades. Perhaps for this reason, Evanier doesn't feel compelled to limit his personal pantheon to a few name brand geniuses like Kirby and Barks; the author's spotlight casts a wide enough beam to illuminate such equally solid, if less celebrated, masters of the comic book form as Creepy magazine mainstay Archie Goodwin and longtime Dell Comics editor Chase Craig, as well as a bullpen full of unsung artists like Supergirl penciller Jim Mooney and the late Owen Fitzgerald, an obscure cartoonist and animator who, Evanier insists, was, hands down, the fastest artist ever to work in comics. Evanier rounds out his volume of essays--many, if not most, of which first appeared in slightly different form in The Comics Buyers Guide--with well-researched explorations of such little-understood pockets of comic book subculture as the history and creation of the Comics Code Authority; the true impact of the internet and computers on the creation and distribution of comics; the difficulty of arriving at a consensus on exactly what time period defines the golden age of comics; and a number of other topics you'd probably never guess you were interested in until you came across them while browsing this endlessly engaging little volume. Comic Books and Other Necessities of Life may not entirely explain my continuing fascination with funny books twenty-five years after I stopped buying them, but discovering that a guy as intelligent, articulate, and funny as Mark Evanier shares my obsession sure helps.

Collecting a selection of "Point of View" columns (including several that have never before been published) by comic book writer, essayist, and historian Mark Evanier. Topics covered range from the state of the art form and its leading practitioners including Jack Kirby and Carl Barks to convention-going and Mark's old comic book club. His acclaimed columns are surrounded by a new cover and interior illustrations by the award-winning MAD cartoonist (and Mark's collaborator of 20 years on Groo The Wanderer) Sergio Aragones.